

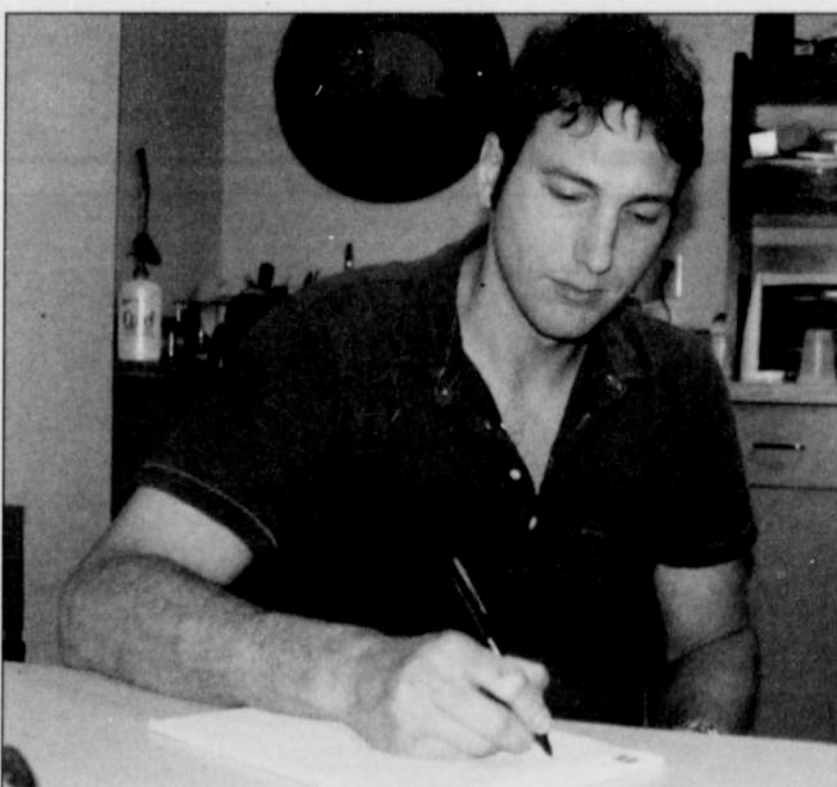
Prompted by animal mistreatment accusations from former OHSU primate center technician Matt Rossell, the U.S. Department of Agriculture conducted an investigation. Despite the 50-page complaint filed on behalf of the Animal Legal Defense Fund the previous August, the USDA announced in January 2001 that allegations of mistreatment in the Primate Research Center were unfounded.

"If you look at the criticisms of OHSU, there's little to no content there. There are no mentions of legal violations because they don't have any information to put there regarding violations," said Jim Newman, a spokesman for OHSU who has worked with Roselli. He noted that six of the eight institutions on PETA's list have primate centers, which he says automatically makes them a candidate for the list of worst labs.

OHSU also earned its spot on PETA's list for what Mongiello calls its history of being "closed and reclusive about their treatment toward animals."

"OHSU has historically fought legally to keep any of this information about deaths of animals and the way they treat animals out of the public eye. It's very difficult for animal protection groups to look at them without an undercover investigation to determine whether they're treating their animals right," said Mongiello.

Rossell is the Northwest outreach coordinator for In Defense of Animals (IDA), an animal rights group that has embroiled OHSU in lawsuits for more than a decade. IDA's most recent lawsuit against OHSU is in remand from the Multnomah County Circuit Court of Appeals while lawyers representing both parties come to terms about disclosing what IDA calls public records. IDA members are seeking behavior and health records for monkeys at the primate center. This is the second such lawsuit, the first in 1995, involving videotapes of monkeys involved in a breast milk study. The current lawsuit, which was filed in July 2001, is requesting documents dating back to 1995.



Portland gay activist Todd Brown calls animal research at OHSU "the cruellest experiments that we haven't seen since the Holocaust."

"We're confident we're going to win this, but OHSU's strategy seems to be to do everything they can to roadblock watchdog organizations like ours to disseminate public documents to the public," said Roselli.

The university has asked IDA for an amount between \$12,000 and \$150,000 to cover the cost of redacting proprietary information from the documents. IDA's lawyers argue that a component of the Freedom of Information Act states access to public information cannot be prohibitively expensive.

"This thing has been dragging on for years," said Dave Bahr, an attorney with the Western Environmental Law Center in Eugene, representing IDA. "The parties are evaluating the appropriate steps to take next."

LAB RATS

In March 2004, OHSU released a statement to the media claiming, "Biology Behind Homosexuality in Sheep, Study Confirms: OHSU researchers show brain anatomy, hormone production may be cause."

An article by Roselli and Stormshak in the February 2004 issue of the journal *Endocrinology* states that approximately 8 percent of rams are exclusively "male-oriented" or exhibit same-sex mate preference. The article further delves into the brain structures of these rams, finding differences in groups of cells controlling sexual behavior between "male-oriented" and "female-oriented" rams.

According to the article, the researchers also say that brain anatomy and hormone production may determine whether rams prefer other rams over ewes.

Roselli's study consisted of 27 adult sheep, including eight rams exhibiting a female mate preference, nine "male-oriented" rams and 10 ewes. The researchers discovered an irregularly shaped, densely packed cluster of nerve cells in the hypothalamus of the sheep brain, which controls reproductive functions. This cluster, called the ovine sexually dimorphic nucleus (oSDN for short), was similarly shaped in ewes and male-oriented rams, both smaller than the cell clusters in rams that preferred ewes. Straight sheep oSDN clusters also contained more neurons than in male-oriented rams and ewes.

"When we looked at the brains of rams that were exclusively attracted to other males vs. those attracted to females, we found differences in the size of a brain area that has been implicated in the control of sexual behaviors, including sexual partner preferences in a variety of animals including humans," said Roselli.

In another study, the researchers exposed fetal sheep to a drug that inhibits testosterone's cellular action through the aromatase pathway that converts testosterone into estradiol, which acts through estrogen receptors to alter brain development in the male. Findings suggest that the cell cluster of the straight rams expressed higher levels of aromatase.

According to an OSU newsletter dated May 23, 1997, Stormshak explained that in some species, the hormone estrogen brings about mating behavior in which males seek females for copulation. Aromatase expression was no different between male-oriented rams and ewes.

According to the OHSU, Roselli's study was the first to demonstrate an association between sexual partner preferences and brain structure in non-human animals.

Roselli's study is part of a five-year effort funded through 2008. The team continues its experiments to further characterize the rams' behavior and is

**"I THINK IT'S ANOTHER
VERY TROUBLING EXAMPLE
OF NONACCEPTANCE
OF GAY PEOPLE.
THE GOVERNMENT
IS STILL LOOKING AT IT
AS A DISEASE."**

—TODD BROWN



Activist Alyssa Collins objects to OHSU's sexual orientation experiments on gay sheep.

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Hala J. Gores, Attorney

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